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*"Leaves" From the Notebook of a
Tamed Rebel . . .*

FOUR
MOUNTAINS
IN A
TROUBLED LAND

By Gene Scott, Ph.D.

A DOLORES PRESS PUBLICATION

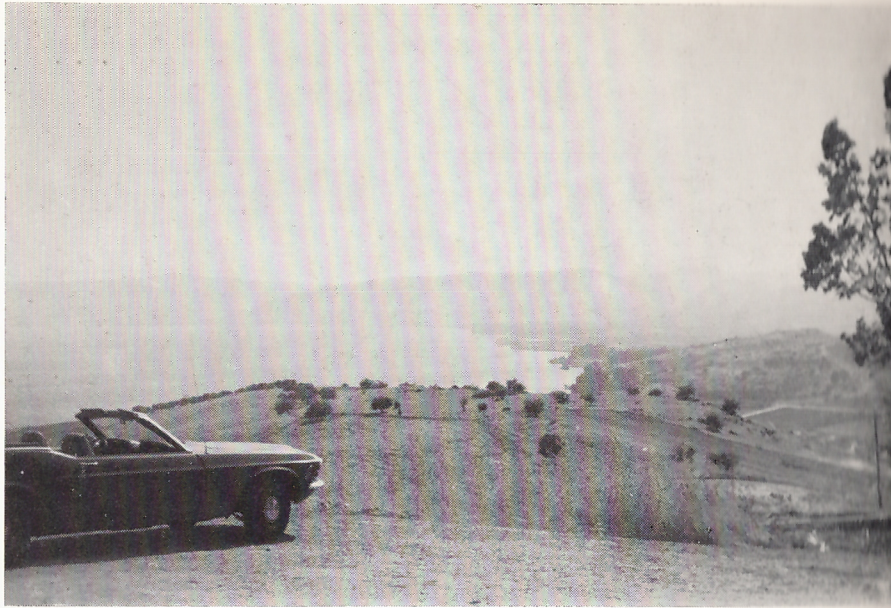
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Four Mountains in a Troubled Land
New



—Photo by Wescott

The author's rented car "rests" atop the Mount of Beatitudes with the Sea of Galilee in the background.



—Photo by Wescott

The dry and desolate Mount of Temptation looms above Jericho in this "troubled land." The frame buildings of a refugee camp reflect some of its current trouble.

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The outside cover photo by Wescott shows the rugged Mountain range which is the wilderness into which Jesus withdrew at the time of his temptation.



Sycamore "leaves" on the plain of Megiddo frame towering Mount Tabor in the modern Israel. This peaceful scene belies the destiny of the Biblical place called "Armageddon."

INTRODUCTION

"Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Rebel" is open heart verbal surgery. It lays bare the heartfelt reactions of a life-changing experience.

Every life of giant influence has undergone a crucible experience that gives to it a unique shape. This crucible is usually a place—sometimes very terrible in nature.

These "Leaves" are written "on location" at such places. The impact of direct exposure to such a spot has permanent influence on a sensitive soul. This is particularly true when the encounter is linked with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the life of the person whose experience first marks that place with prominence.

All men with life and spirit are rebels by nature. Tough experiences can either break or tame the rebel. A "tamed rebel" still has his spirit and his life, but it is all under the control of a higher power. Sometimes though, tamed rebels want to throw off the harness. At such times, direct exposure to the crucible experience of other (and greater) tamed rebels can both encourage and renew one's determination "to finish his course."

All history changed its dating system with the arrival of Jesus Christ on the scene of history . . . still, the Bible book of Hebrews records that:

*"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience
by the things which he suffered."*

That's the **taming** process. These "Leaves" are from the notebook of one who journeyed all through the land of Israel in order to feel firsthand the force of crucible "mountain" experiences in the life of Jesus—the Christ.



— Photo by Wescott

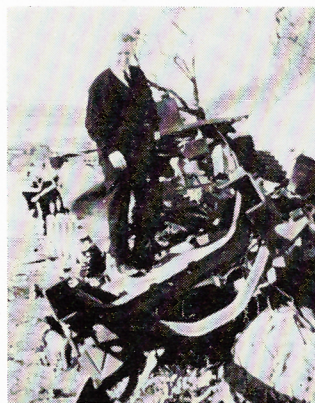
A mid-summer full moon rises over the Dead Sea.



—Photo by Wescott

A modern cable car shortens the trip to the plateau top of Masada—the "Alamo" of Hebrew history.

About the Author



The author stands on the remains of a Syrian tank somewhere in Northern Israel.

Dr. Gene Scott is a scholar and lecturer who has made a vital impact on Christendom with his Bible Teaching to groups encompassing virtually every denomination. Though raised a minister's son, he rebelled against tradition early in life and became agnostic in college. His search for a faith caused him to change majors on every degree.

A hard study of the resurrection of Christ led to a firm faith, and Dr. Scott is best known for his summation of this return to faith under the title: "A Philosopher Looks at Christ." Scott went on to complete a Ph.D. in Philosophies of Education at Stanford University. At Stanford his Doctoral Dissertation dealt with the theology of Reinhold Niebuhr and he did specialized studies in comparative religions and far eastern religious philosophies.

His life has many chapters. Dr. Scott is President of the United Christian Service Foundation in Sacramento, California. In addition he serves as Preaching Pastor with his father at Wescott Christian Center in Oroville, California and as Consulting Pastor to Melodyland Christian Center in Anaheim, California. He has served as educational consultant to Foreign Missions Boards on assignments taking him to schools on every continent. As a businessman he acts as President for five different corporations and in this grueling activity has been forced to make his Bible teachings apply to life where it's "at." As a convention speaker and Bible teacher his work has been worldwide. Recorded tapes of his lectures and preaching have been widely circulated by Bible Voice, Inc., of Hollywood, Wescott Christian Center of Oroville, and the Melodyland Christian Center of Anaheim.

I have known Dr. Scott personally for over 23 years. As a man, his life has consistently expressed the message he speaks. The publishers are most pleased to be identified by this book with another of his works in written form.

—EARL HERRICK

Vice President

Dolores Press, Inc.



—Photo by Wescott

Ruins of "The Good Samaritan Inn" alongside the "Road to Jericho."



— Photo by Wescott

At the north end of the Dead Sea is a monument commemorating the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.



—Photo by Wescott

A modern highway now winds along the entire west shore of the Dead Sea.



— Photo by Wescott

The rugged Mount of Temptation towers over the Oasis of Jericho.



— Photo by Wescott

A Jordanian tank lies in ruins alongside the road to Jericho—a relic of the recent war in this “troubled land.”



— Photo by Wescott

It is a Syrian tank that lies in ruins alongside the road to Samaria—another reminder that the land is “troubled.”

Preface

This is a troubled land . . .

THAT WAS OBVIOUS

from the moment

I stepped off the plane
at Lod Airport.

A tight security by Israeli police made
the airport a nightmare of long queues
and restless, irritated people.

FINALLY,

In rented car,

I headed out of Lod

on the winding climbs

up to Jerusalem.

Lining the highway
were clusters of sol-
diers, women as well
as men, hitchhiking to
and from army camps.

**The signs of trouble are
everywhere.**

AT THE AIRPORT,

customs personnel are on strike.

ON THE HIGHWAY,

soldier barricades stop the traffic at periodic points.

You pick up a couple of teenage soldiers . . .

one crawls in the front seat with you . . .

SUB-MACHINE GUN IN HAND.

The impatient thrust of these people to grab life while living on the constant edge of war reflects itself even in the traffic. Slow down an instant and horns blare at you with incessant force.

I could feel the tension as I motored through dark streets of Jerusalem to the Intercontinental Hotel in the Arab section.

By day it's not so obvious . . .

but you feel the pressure at night.

I arrived late . . .

so the hotel entrance door was locked.

I finally got in and settled down to think about this land.

It was troubled

IN JESUS' DAY TOO.

OUTWARDLY,

the land was under the iron heel of Roman control . . .

but the people seethed

in deep felt resentments, conflict, and revolutionary spirit.

Oppressive taxes weighted the people down . . .

Political struggles gave hated leadership . . .

centuries old religious traditions were being battered by Roman idolatry and Sadducee liberals.

Intrigue . . .

oppression . . .

conflict . . .

TROUBLE.

That was the order of the day in Jesus' time.

From that sea of human strife Jesus went

TO MOUNTAIN TOPS,

there to face,

settle,

or express

the vital commitments
of His life.

The trouble is still here,
only different.

But . . .

**SO ARE THE
MOUNTAINS.**

IT'S THOSE MOUNTAINS,

and more particularly

JESUS' EXPERIENCES ON THOSE
MOUNTAINS,

that this book is about.



— Photo by Wescott

*Dateline: Near Jericho
Mountain No. 1*

IT ALL SEEMED A BIT UNREAL . . .

to be here in an open topped mustang conver-
tible.

I eased down the road

from the Mount of
Olives,

swung left,

then picked up speed

**as I wound through the valley beneath
the old city walls.**

Jerusalem's east wall

with the golden gate

loomed high on the right

and the Garden of Gethsem-
ane stretched above to the
left.

Around an ancient Arab grave yard the road climbed
to twist and turn

through Bethany.

THEREAFTER,

the road starts dropping sharply.

The heat hits like a furnace
blast.

Through barren hills

I pitched off toward Jericho

and the Dead Sea . . .

The good Samaritan Inn lay dead ahead on the
right . . .

then more hills

as the road tumbled deeper into the
Jordan Rift.

The signs read . . .

"Nebi Musa,"

where one tradition says Moses was
buried . . .

"Dead Sea,"

lowest point on earth . . .

"Qumran,"

where the dead sea scrolls were found . . .

"Jericho,"

oldest inhabited city in this land . . .

and

. . . then on the left

**the rugged and raw desert Mount
of Temptation hove in view.**

Luke's Gospel reads:

*"And Jesus being full of
the Holy Ghost returned
from Jordan, and was led
by the Spirit into the
wilderness. Being forty
days tempted of the
devil."*

Tradition identifies

that

HOT,

DRY,

JAGGED,

towering,

DESOLATE

MOUNTAIN ON MY LEFT

as the place where Jesus was

tempted at the beginning of his ministry.

I parked on the roadside,
in the heat,
and just looked.

Out,

AND UP THERE,

the Lord of Glory fought the
Devil's temptations

and crystallized the
path of his ministry.

Three great temptations he faced—
known by all Bible students.

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL RECORDS THE THREE IN THE SEQUENCE APPROVED BY MOST SCHOLARS:

(1) THE TEMPTATION OF FLESHLY DESIRE . . .

namely,

turn stones to bread and
satisfy the famished hunger
of forty days fast.

(2) THE TEMPTATION TO BE SUPER-SPIRITUAL . . .

namely,

take a big leap of faith
off a pinnacle to “show
off” trust in God and
God’s power to save.

(3) THE TEMPTATION OF WORDLY ACCLAIM . . .

namely,

take kingdoms now,
in this “seen” world
with the devil’s help,
rather than deny self
to obey God and trust
his promises of future
reward and an unseen
Kingdom.

In bare simplicity,

these temptations offer alternative

**patterns of life
style.**

The life style, to which true
Christian ministry commits,

IS SACRIFICE OF SELF TO THE WILL OF GOD.

In this mountain wilderness

Jesus faced

the temptations to do otherwise.

See it again:

TEMPTATION NUMBER ONE

was to identify the self with fleshly appetites

and use his power to satisfy those wants.

This is an elementary conflict in life, but one which has to be faced by anyone committed to God's will.

Would Jesus be ruled by fleshly appetites

OR

would the appetites be controlled by a self committed to God's will.

The wilderness location and the famished condition of Jesus through 40 days fasting added abundant

rationalization to the temptation of appetite.

Jesus' answer was, "Man shall not live by bread alone."

A ministry of fleshly self-denial was given permanent fix by Jesus in this defeat of the first temptation in the wilderness.

THE SECOND TEMPTATION

appealed to the tendency of a God oriented person to be a spiritual extremist.

Having failed to motivate Christ to be a slave of fleshly desire,

the Devil tried to make him "super-spiritual."

FROM A HIGH PINNACLE,

he said,

"Cast yourself down . . ."

"Didn't God promise to have his angels care for you and keep you from dashing your foot against a stone."

In other words

"Show off."

Display your great faith in God
by a fanatical leap.

NOW,

can you imagine the effect on the people
of Jerusalem to see Jesus take one great
flying leap off the pinnacle of the southeast
wall of Jerusalem into the Kidron canyon?

Just before hitting the rocky
bottom . . .

angels would swoop
down . . .

catch . . .

and gently carry Jesus back to the
top . . .

to set him down safely.

That ought to prove his spiritual greatness . . .

his messiahship . . .

in one grand fell swoop.

Instant "spiritual
giant hood" to be at-

tained by one big
leap of faith.

TEMPTING? . . . YES,

if the desire is simply to exalt one's own
spiritual ego by "showing off" an ability to
trust God.

More accurately said . . .

this is the tendency to

*"crawl out on limbs in order to force
God to keep you from being sawed
off . . ."*

Jesus' answer to that temptation was
sane and clear.

*"Thou shalt not tempt the
Lord thy God."*

YOU SEE,

**Self can still be served under the
guise of spiritual achievements.**

The temptation can always come
for saints to seek spiritual hap-
penings and achievements which
glorify, exalt, or bring gratifica-
tion and recognition to self.

This is still

(exposed in its true nature)

making God and his power the servant of man's self.

God intends sane use of His power.

God doesn't need spiritual show offs . . .

because He doesn't need to show off Himself.

JESUS IS WILLING TO DO

what God wants,

when God wants,

where God wants,

the way God wants . . .

but He will never tempt God.

That's the first requirement

FOR BEING REALLY TRUSTED

WITH GOD'S POWER.

TEMPTATION NUMBER THREE

**APPEALED TO THE SELF'S DESIRE
FOR POWER AND WORLDLY
ACCLAIM.**

Having mastered fleshly appetite and ambition for spiritual display, the next temptation is the desire to be master over everything.

Again,

the temptation is sure to face any life committed to God's will. As fleshly appetites and self-displaying spiritual demonstration must be brought under control,

so must prideful ambition.

When the self masters its own fleshly appetites and controls its "show off" tendencies in spiritual display, it can face a subsequent danger of wanting to master all else.

The "heady power" of self control can tempt one to try and control everything. The Devil stands ever ready to help here, too. He will give you anything he can to make him your "over-lord" rather than allow you to obediently follow God undisturbed.

The true servant of God must learn that he cannot be the slave of anyone or anything save God . . .

BUT EQUALLY TRUE

he IS the slave of God,

and not the master.

As the self must serve something **higher** than an appetite for bread or a desire for spiritual show,

the same self must

lower itself to be ruled by God.

TO GOD ALONE

the self must say,

"Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."

As I sat and looked at that mountain

a truth settled in.

Every man who really commits himself to do God's will must face

exactly

these same three tests.

The temptation somewhere comes to use God as an instrument to cater to ones own

fleshly wants. "Man shall not live by bread alone" is a truth to be remembered by every saint of God in such a test.

WHEN THE BATTLE WITH FLESHLY APPETITES IS UNDER CONTROL,

equally dangerous is the tendency to get over spectacular in one's demonstrated ability to trust God.

"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God"

is just as much a part of

the saints battle plan

as the "leap of faith."

For the true servant,

God is neither

HEAD WAITER

NOR BELL CAPTAIN.

HE DOESN'T EXIST

to provide food when ordered

NOR TO RESCUE ME

FROM SELF-CREATED PROBLEMS.

**HE IS THE MASTER OF
THE HOUSE . . .**

to be obeyed.

THIRD,

TO EACH OF US IS GIVEN

**natural powers and oppor-
tunities.**

They can be used to create

Kingdoms of a sort here and on a path
different from the path that God wills.

Each true servant of God

**IS GIVEN A
CHOICE.**

GO YOUR OWN WAY FOR PERSONAL GAIN NOW,
OR . . .

SACRIFICE ALL THAT OPPORTUNITY AND
OBEY GOD

wherever he leads and whatever the
cost.

To the temptation for wordly king-
doms, Jesus said,

"Get behind me . . . Satan!"

**In the dust that hot afternoon I drove, closely
as I could to the mountain . . .**

raised the top on the car . . .

LOCKED THE DOORS . . .

and then walked up
the hill a ways to sit
on the ground.

The green oasis of
Jericho was on my
left front. To the
right, and far off,
stretched the Dead
Sea with the Moun-
tains of Moab dim in
the distant haze.

Paul's words came to mind . . .

*" . . . Christ Jesus: Who, being
in the form of God, thought
it not robbery to be equal with
God . . ." (Phil. 2:5,6)*

WHAT A PLACE HE HAD!

YET . . .

From that wonderful eternal po-
sition

came Jesus

TO THIS

HOT,

TERRIBLE

MOUNTAIN . . .

to be hungry . . .

and not to misuse God's
power; . . .

to be challenged to make a super-
spiritual demonstration . . .

and control himself; . . .

to be offered everything in this
world . . .

and still choose to do
God's will, even to
die a failure in the
eyes of men.

"GOD . . ."

I said,

**"Don't ever let the memory
of this hill and its meaning
leave me."**

Jesus spent 40 days
here fasting and still

conquered fleshly ap-
petite. And he pro-
mised to help me in
my lesser battles.

He helped to form the worlds
but he wouldn't use God's power
just to show off. He calmly
quoted scripture instead of
making a fantastic leap off of a
pinacle.

**God help me, and his other servants, to
dignify the word of God more than our
own spiritual accomplishments.**

He turned down ev-
erything in this world,
to give his life and
die, that the will of
God might be ac-
complished in his life.

Paul's words really fit here:

*"And that He died for all, that
they which live should not
henceforth live unto themselves,
but unto Him which died for
them, and rose again." (II Cor.
5:15) (Emphasis by Author)*

THERE'S THE CHOICE.

The roughness of this mountain

spoke eloquently that

**the choice is not
an easy one.**

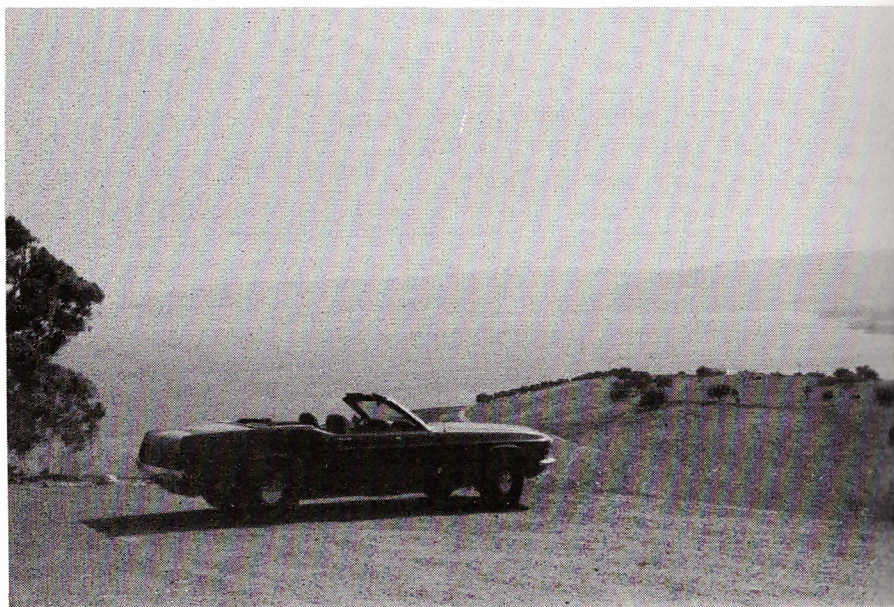
BUT THAT'S THE PATH OF
GOD'S WILL.

SO . . .

Let's face up to it...

AND

*We too can come off Mount
Temptation in the "power of
the spirit" as Jesus did.*



— Photo by Wescott

*Dateline: Near Galilee
Mountain No. 2*

The cool breezes

WAFING UP FROM BLUE GALILEE

WERE A PLEASANT CONTRAST

**to the dry burning
winds around the
Dead Sea.**

I was more than 150 kilometers north now.

The winding switch backs on the highway
from Nazareth down to Tiberias were behind
and I was heading north and east through the
banana trees of Kibbutz Nof Ginosar.

Another series of switchbacks on
the north side of the lake

AND . . .

LIKE A GIANT AMPHITHEATER,

**the Mount of Beatitudes spread before me
on the right.**

It is easy to see in "mind's eye"
the crowds gathered here to
listen to Jesus teach.

Galilee is at the foot of the hill . . .

the ruins of Capernaum are on around its edge

in a grove of more modern Sycamore trees.

I drove in to the monastery on the hilltop,

parked,

and walked about 200 yards down

to a flat crowned area from which the mountain spreads gently on all sides.

In imagination

I WENT BACK

almost 2000 years.

ALL ACROSS THIS
HILL THE CROWD

WOULD BE STRETCHED.

And Jesus began to
teach . . .

He knew his crowd . . .

that before him were

murderers,

thieves,

prostitutes,

intelligentsia,

gangsters,

juvenile delinquents,

self-righteous complacent

religionists,

politicians,

hypocrites,

and just plain ordinary people.

He looked them over,

BEGAN TO PREACH

and his message touched every single one of them.

Here on this mountain Jesus was the conqueror.

His words of wisdom
crucified the World.

He preached his most personal sermon and no one was left unscathed.

This was His greatest moment as a preacher and He met the occasion.

I said to myself as I sat on a rock and read the sermon on the mount . . .

"HE SURE DIDN'T MINCE WORDS:

HE DIDN'T CATER TO HIS AUDIENCE;
HE DIDN'T FOOL WITH PUBLIC SPEAKING
GIMMICKS AND CROWD PLEASING
ANTICS."

**He just simply spoke the
truth about life, man, and
God and let the chips fall.**

As said earlier

He crucified the world here with words.
The Sermon on the Mount has been allowed
to take the role in the minds of some as
only sweet moral little homilies.

NOT SO . . .

**Here's some of it
from Matthew's
Gospel . . .**

He fearlessly jarred the complacency of the reli-
gionists:

*" . . . except your righteousness shall exceed the
righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall
in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."*

He was uncompromising on fleshly indulgence,

*" . . . if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it
out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable
for thee that one of thy members should
perish, and not that thy whole body should
be cast into hell. And if thy right hand
offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from
thee . . ."*

To the spiritual show offs, he said,

*" . . . do not your alms before men,
to be seen of them . . ."*

*" . . . when thou doest thine alms,
do not sound a trumpet before thee,
as the hypocrites do . . .*

*" . . . when thou prayest,
thou shalt not be as the
hypocrites are: for they
love to pray standing in
the synagogues and in the
corners of the streets,
that they may be seen of
men . . . pray to thy
Father . . . which seeth
in secret . . ."*

To the self-righteous . . .

He revealed the importance of
motives to a God that seeth the
heart and He exposed the evil of
heart as equal to the evil of deeds . . .

to hate . . . equals murder . . .

to lust . . . equals adul-
tery.

To superior minded judges of
fellow men Jesus bluntly said,

*"Thou hypocrite, first
cast out the beam out of
thine own eye; and then
shalt thou see clearly to*

*cast out the mote out of
thy brother's eye."*

He was no pied piper seeking to build a crowd to follow him by any means . . .

**He said it like it
was . . .**

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it . . ."

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

WOW!

THAT'S TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

. . . without fear or favour.

THE SCRIPTURE SAYS,

" . . . the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7: 28,29)

I really think the institutional religious world

BEGAN TO HATE JESUS

here on this mountain.

**. . . and the one who
climbed this hill to
denounce the world
and its standards**

(including the religious world)

would later be forced to climb another hill

to be mocked by this same world

on a Friday called Good!

It seemed to me as I sat on that Mount of Beatitudes

that it,

too,

**represented a crisis
point which every
faithful follower of
God must reach.**

After the commitments made at the Mount of Temptation are behind, a servant of God will come to another point in life where the dedica-

tion made **alone** on
Mount Temptation must
face the pressure of
others.

ON BEATITUDE MOUNTAIN

the opportunity is faced

to use an influence-attained
for further aggrandizement of
self.

With the attention of Beati-
tude Hill and its crowds,
the temptation is to com-
promise the message to re-
main popular.

The God given opportunity of influ-
ence and audience can be used for one's
own gain,

or used

to proclaim God's truth regardless of con-
sequences.

THOSE WHO LEARN FROM JESUS

will follow his pattern.

SHOULD THE ADORING CROWD GATHER,

will the servant

BE MAN PLEASER

OR GOD PLEASER?

Jesus towered on that mountain

and his words live on . . .

AND ON . . .

AND ON.

That's history,

BUT THE CHOICE AT THE TIME WAS A TOUGH ONE FOR CHRIST.

IN THE TRANQUIL PEACE OF THIS
AFTERNOON I PRAYED.

I prayed God to make me,

and every other servant of
God,

come down the moun-
tain of Beatitude

*(should such op-
portunity come)*

AS JESUS DID . . .

still the voice of God

**WHETHER THE CROWD LIKES
THE MESSAGE OR NOT.**



The vast plain of Megiddo with Mount Tabor in the distance.

*Dateline: Near Megiddo
Mountain No. 3*

It was almost midnight

when I sped off the plain of Megiddo.

I passed the twinkling lights of the little village of
Nain,

crossed a narrow bridge,

and then turned sharp
left off the main road.

**I WAS ON THE NARROW WAY UP TO THE
TOP OF MOUNT TABOR.**

There was a full moon,

the night was warm, and I had
the top down on the Mustang.

I STOPPED,

switched off the lights

and looked up at the distant
silhouette of the mountain top.

Did I dare to drive up there this late at night?

Jesus and his key disciples climbed the
Mount of Transfiguration . . .

AT NIGHT.

*A tradition going back
to the time of St. Silvia*

*of Aquitania claims
Mount Tabor as the site
of the transfiguration*.*

The road was through Arab villages

AND

I WAS IN A TROUBLED LAND.

With a burst of resolve . . .

I said to myself,

"I'm going to do it."

The first part led in a long flat
stretch to an Arab village and then

the climb begins.

I inched

through hairpin turns and . . .

I must confess . . .

*my skin begin to tighten
and a little round knot
balled up in my stomach.*

I could see the lights of Nazareth
get smaller and the shadow of
the precipice from which they

*Other scholars with very weighty argument identify Mount Hermon as the site. Since the purpose of this book is to "feel" the spiritual message of a crisis experience in the life of Christ we choose not to debate the issue here. The Psalmist said of both Tabor and Hermon "The north wind and south wind are of thy fashioning; thy name wakes the glad echoes of Tabor and Hermon." Both mountains are rich in heritage of Biblical experience.

would cast Jesus down was sud-
denly below me on the left,
instead of above me.

Cactus plants loomed up—

and then gave way to little pine
trees.

The switchbacks had
moved to the north side
of the mountain.

Safed . . .

the city set on a hill above Galilee

didn't look so high now.

The road forked and
straight ahead it went
down to another
Arab village,

Kafr Shibli.

I turned right instead,

and the herring bone

zig zags

of the road

got sharper

On the right,
the mountain fell off the side of the road
into a black void

until it hit the plain
which spread all the way to Megiddo
and the rugged ridge of Carmel.

Village lights twinkled far below . . .

like stars in an upside down
world.

Around a sharp bend,

I had a choice.

To the left ran one road along
the ridge top,
to the right another.

I went right.

The road climbed higher . . .

Then through a gated arch,

DOWN A NARROW TREE LINED
DRIVE,

TO BARLUZZI'S FAMOUS FRAN-
CISCAN CHURCH OF THE TRANS-
FIGURATION.

Before entering the arch,

I saw a broad area off to
the right of the road . . .

clear and bathed in moon-
light.

I PULLED OFF
AND STOPPED.

At the edge of the clearing

**THE MOUNTAIN DROPPED
SHARPLY,**

north and east.

On a night like this,
in a place like this
Jesus brought three disciples . . .

to a Mount of Transfiguration.

WHAT A SIGHT!

I had come this far,

so I decided to make the most
of it.

I got out of the car and
walked in the moonlight
along the rim.

OUT THERE

in front of me
stretched a vast plain.

Deborah and her armies defeated the iron
sythe-wheeled chariots of Sisera there.

Nain

twinkled faintly,
and beyond that . . .

the shadow of "Little Hermon" where Gideon
won his victories.

**Let the eyes swing right across the
plain of Megiddo and . . .**

unbelievably as I re-
flected on prophecies of
Armageddon in this
place . . . a pair of
Israeli jet fighters on pa-
trol roared past in a
huge banking turn.

Elijah's haunts,

the rocky chain called Mount Carmel, was
a distant outline.

Then due right, Nazareth spread
lights across her hills.

Look left, you see the
glimmering lights of
Cana of Galilee and the
distant lakeshore towns.

This mountain has quite a history.

A church was here in the fourth century;
by the sixth century there were three (rem-
iniscent of Peter's wish to build 3 taber-
nacles). The Moslem invasion swept them
all away. Crusaders restored the churches
when they came and Benedictine Monks
occupied the mountain. In 1142 they were
massacred. More Benedictines came back in
1183 and remained until the defeat of the
Crusaders forced them out.

Next came the Sultan of Da-
mascus. He built a fortress on
Tabor to control the approach
to Acre.

A courageous band of Christian
Knights scaled the mountain in
1217, but were defeated and
driven off.

In the following year the Sultan
dismantled the fortress in order
to deny it to the Christians.

By 1255 the Knights of
St. John were there to
rebuild the churches and
the Benedictine Abbey.

It was the Mameluke Sultan of
Egypt, Baibars, who came next.

That warrior who began life as a slave, drove the Christians from the mountain and razed the buildings to the ground.

Then Mt. Tabor goes into a tunnel of history . . . disappearing from the records for three and a half centuries.

It emerges with the Franciscans in residence again.

Under them,

the remarkable church by the famous Barluzzi was constructed.

BEFORE IT ALL . . .

Jesus and his three disciples . . .

one memorable night.

I tried to absorb all this as I walked or stood alone among the rocks and trees on the mountain rimtop.

The ruins and the churches reared dark shadows behind me.

I closed them out of my mind

by turning my back.

For a long time I just sat on the top cover of the mustang convertible

studying the awesome span of

land,

hills,

and lights

spread before me to the south and west.

I visualized just

**JESUS AND HIS THREE
on a lonely night**

HERE.

HE MUST HAVE BROUGHT THEM WITH HIM
FOR A PURPOSE.

BUT LIKE THEY WOULD DO IN ANOTHER
TIME OF NEED,

THEY FELL ASLEEP.

JESUS IS LEFT ALONE . . .

but,

NO,

not alone . . .

Peter is awakened by voices,

AND,

to his amazement,

**JESUS IS TALKING TO
MOSES AND ELIJAH.**

I wondered as I sat
there if,

like Peter,

I would have been asleep too . . .

had I been there.

And what of my reactions on awakening? . . .

*I looked around at the
eerie shadows in the
moonlight and thought, if
I had awakened and
heard and saw what Peter
did, I might have taken
one long flying leap off
the mountain to Meg-
gido's Plain . . . far be-
low.*

JESUS WAS TRANSFIGURED

before them . . .

**Moses and Elijah disap-
peared and**

"THEY SAW JESUS ONLY!"

Then the thundering voice

from heaven.

I looked up wondering

what it would have
been like.

THE VOICE SAID . . .

***"This is my beloved Son . . . hear ye
him."***

Again, I say,

WOW! . . .

That old mountain
must have shrunk by
comparison and only
Jesus was in view.

THOSE THREE DISCIPLES NEVER FORGOT THAT
EXPERIENCE.

Years later John said . . .

"We beheld his glory . . ."

BUT MY JOURNEY UP THIS
MOUNTAIN WAS FOR THE PUR-
POSE OF CONCENTRATING ON
THE MEANING OF THE TRANS-
FIGURATION EVENT IN JESUS'
MINISTRY.

THIS MOUNTAIN CAME,

**toward the end, and in the maturity
of his ministry.**

On rugged Mount Temptation
he had faced the Path of God's
will, the alternates to it, and won.

On gentle Mount
Beatitude he had
faced the crowds of
success in ministry
and declared the truth
no matter what.

NOW,

on the towering Mt. of Transfiguration
he must get ready for the su-
preme test which would lie
ahead.

His life would take a
different turn.

From Galilee and ministry he would go up to Jeru-
salem . . .

with its opposition

AND DEATH!

Perhaps he took the
three with him in order
to talk with them about
what lay ahead.

Maybe he wanted their encourage-
ment . . .

maybe their understanding and prayer about
the path ahead.

THESE THREE . . .

with an opportunity of a lifetime . . .

FELL ASLEEP!

I "tuned in" on that
mountain experience as
I had on the Mount in
the desert above Jericho
and the hill over Galilee.

Every ministry starts
at a Mount of Temp-
tation where God's
will is chosen despite
alternatives that may
look more attractive.

Every servant of God
that is faithful in minis-
try to human needs is
given an opportunity of
human approval like the
one faced on Mount
Beatitude. There one
faces the test . . . for
for whom shall I speak,
God or man?

Likewise every ministry knows the time when faithful helpers have joined and a further task for God is faced . . . usually more difficult than all that were faced before.

At such times

every leader of men knows the desire to have associates he can count on.

You want to take them aside, explain,

share the problem and task you face,

RECEIVE THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT.

MY EXPERIENCE TELLS ME . . .

and Jesus' example here shows . . .

YOU PROBABLY CAN'T COUNT ON THE HUMAN HELP YOU SO DESPERATELY DESIRE.

Jesus' helpers slept.

His encouragement,

his companionship,

his conversation came from two

earlier giants who had faced similar discouragements, tests and aloneness . . .

Moses,

who had learned to talk to God alone on a mountain . . .

Elijah,

who had been taught to listen to God's still small voice alone

ON A MOUNTAIN.

They talked with Jesus

about his "decease" . . .

the test that lay before him.

AND, GOD . . .

He roared forth His approval of Christ supreme,

when sleep grogged Peter would equalize Moses and Elijah with Jesus and build three tabernacles there.

As I sat

on that lonely hill,

conviction grew

that the way of faithful ministry must always be the same.

ALONE WITH GOD:

secure His approval . . .

THAT'S ENOUGH.

For encouragement:

Don't solicit the contemporaries that God has called you to lead. Look to the heroes of faith that have gone before . . . they all walked lonely paths after God.

I don't expect mystical appearances of these past heroes, as they did to Jesus, but the hero's lives and examples are in the record of God's book to speak.

Look there,

listen to their voices . . .

if you want encouragement.

Don't let sleepy followers
or tired companions
keep you

FROM DRAWING RICH ENCOURAGEMENT
OUT OF THE LIVES OF GOD'S GIANTS AND
HEARING FOR YOURSELF THE INNER VOICE
OF GOD'S APPROVAL.

AND KNOW THIS . . .

JESUS' TRANSFIGURATION AND GOD'S VOICE OF APPROVAL CAME JUST BEFORE THE PATH TO THE CROSS.

Thank God,

HE ALWAYS GETS US READY FOR THE WORST . . .

even though the worst will come.

And the blessing prepares for the test

. . . remember that.

When they came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus said this to his disciples:

"The Son of Man is soon to be betrayed into the hands of men."

The Mount of Blessing

behind,

The terrible hill of Calvary

LOOMED AHEAD.

I got in my car

and went down,

too.



— Photo by Wescott

Calvary—a lonely hill in Israel where Jesus paid the supreme sacrifice to do the will of God.

*Dateline: Near Jerusalem
Mountain No. 4*

THE GATE CLOSED BEHIND ME

and it was like a different world.

An island of quiet peace

in a noisy troubled
city.

I was at the garden tomb.

A WELL KEPT MEANDERING PATH LEADS
AROUND TO A VIEW POINT ABOVE THE
BUS STATION AND THERE

its ugly

skull-like

face

rears up.

GOLGOTHA ...

the terrible hill called Gordon's Calvary.

I STOOD FOR A LONG TIME,
HARDLY NOTICING THE TOUR-
ISTS WHO CAME AND WENT.

HERE'S WHERE IT ALL
CAME TO A TERRIBLE
CONCLUSION.

JESUS DIED THERE ... AT ...

THE PLACE WHERE THE WILL OF
GOD LED HIM. THAT'S THE AL-
TERNATE TO WHAT THE DEVIL
HAD OFFERED ON THE MOUNT
OF TEMPTATION.

I left the garden tomb approach
to come to the hill another way.
An Arab graveyard covers the top.
I walked the narrow path upward
to stand alone among tombstones
and weeds.

Here
THE LORD OF GLORY
paid the supreme sacrifice . . .

to die alone
for the sins of the world
before a mocking mob.
Neither
I nor anyone else,
COULD DIE FOR THE WORLD
AS JESUS DID.

But each ministry
like Jesus'
HAS ITS OWN CAL-
VARY,

ITS OWN CROSS.

In the midst of many crowding thoughts,

ONE

stood out above the others.

**CALVARY CAME AT THE END OF
JESUS' MINISTRY.**

I said to myself,

*"Gene Scott, what makes you
think that a ministry will get
easier as time goes on and as
you get older?"*

The toughest mountain

FOR JESUS

was the last one

in his earthly ministry.

I THINK THAT SUCH WILL AL-
WAYS BE THE CASE FOR GOD'S
SERVANTS.

ON A HOT DAY IN JERU-
SALEM, ON GOLGOTHA'S
HILL, I SAID,

“God, please help me to take a permanent fix on this truth.”

Jesus' hardest mountain was his last one.

It was there he died a failure in the eyes of men.

But it was there he "finished" the task his father sent him to do.

I prayed,

“Give me, and all God's servants, grace to finish their course.”

I got up,

**WALKED OFF CALVARY,
to go home and face my
next mountain.**

Dateline: Near Bethany

THERE WAS YET ANOTHER MOUNTAIN

in Jesus ministry

“And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and . . . blessed them . . . And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven,” (Luke 24: 50,51).

This was the Mount of Olives . . .

ASCENSION MOUNTAIN . . .

AFTER THE RESURRECTION!

Without the resurrection,

Jesus died a failure in the eyes of men.

The resurrection

VINDICATED HIS PATH.

I thought to myself,

“Being like Jesus may force us to die alone and a failure in the eyes of men as we do the will of God. Only the resurrection will vindicate our path, and it will come . . . but that seems too long a wait for some.”

HOW ABOUT IT? . . .

CLIMB TEMPTATION'S MOUNTAIN TO VICTORY.

Speak the truth on Beatitude Hill . . .

Let God be your strength and His approval alone be enough to

CHANGE YOUR
DARK EXPERI-
ENCES TO A
TRANSFIGURA-
TION MOUN-
TAIN.

FOLLOW GOD ALL THE
WAY TO CALVARY . . .

If you die alone,
then trust God for
resurrection glory.

**That's what following Jesus is all about
anyway.**

SPIRITUAL MOUNTAINEERS

have to be
a tough breed . . .

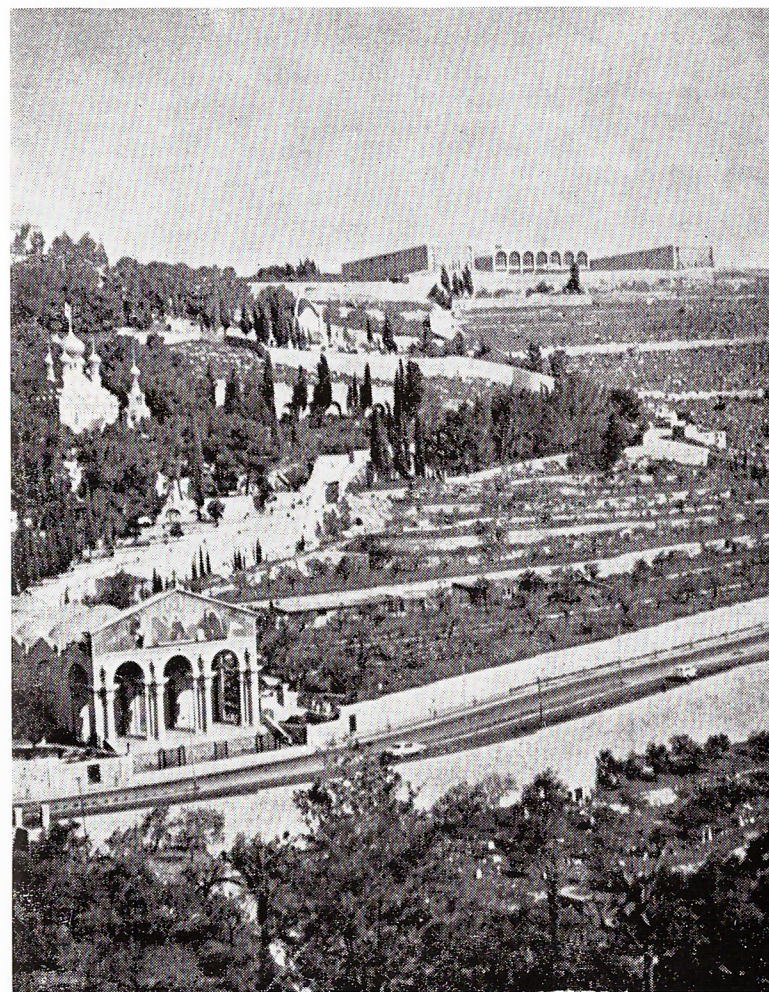
but our leader has carved
the steps in the hill ahead
of us.

SO . . .

climb on . . .

(I said to myself)

**ALL THE WAY TO THE
TOP!**



The Mount of Olives with the Garden of Gethsemane in the foreground. The modern Intercontinental Hotel now stands atop this famous mountain.



— Photo by Wescott

The winding road above Galilee leads north of the Mountain of Beatitudes, from where this picture was taken.

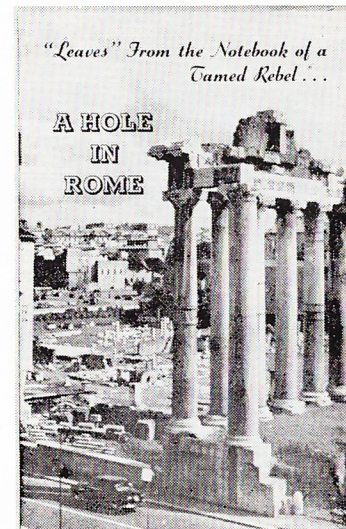


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View of the stretching Plain of Megiddo from off the top of Mount Tabor.

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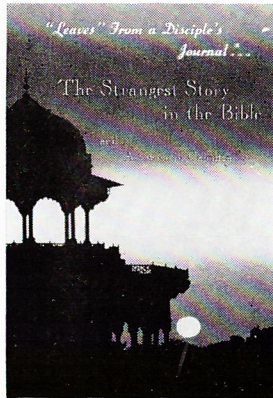
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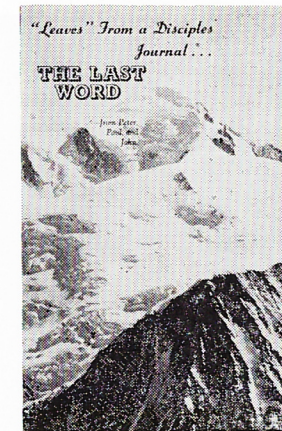
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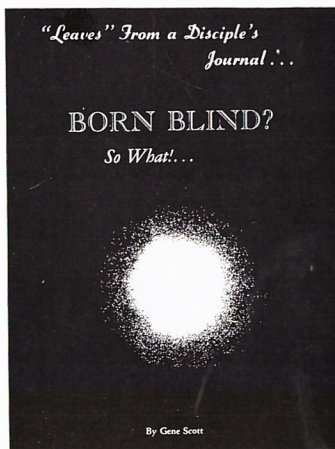
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but let me keep my pigs!

FROM "LODEBAR" . . . *a place of no pastures*

BORN BLIND? *So what . . .*

*Don't bother me with questions,
Just show me the need.*

LIFT UP NOW THINE EYES

A PHILOSOPHER LOOKS AT CHRIST

JESUS CHRIST . . .

Super-Nut? . . . or Super-Natural?



—Photo by Wescott

The old city Jerusalem with the "Dome of the Rock" rising above its ancient walls—as viewed from the Mount of Olives.



—Photo by Wescott

Sunrise over the old city Jerusalem.